

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A method of routing a connectivity plane message to a mobile terminal which can be reached via two or more network nodes (26, 36) of a first type, comprising the steps of:
 - receiving positional information indicating the geographical location of the mobile terminal and routing information, the routing information being associated with a network node (24) of a second type to which the mobile terminal is attached;
 - based on the positional information, determining the network node (36) of the first type via which the connectivity plane message is to be routed to the mobile terminal; and
 - routing the connectivity plane message to the mobile terminal via the determined network node (36) of the first type.
2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the positional information indicates the geographical location of the mobile terminal within an area served by the network node (24) of the second type.
3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 or 2, wherein a network control plane message is routed via the determined network node (36) of the first type to the network node (24) of the second type.
4. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, wherein routing of the connectivity plane message is performed in a communications network (10) that includes a first network portion (12) having a split architecture and a second network portion (14) having a monolithic architecture.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 4, wherein the selected network node (36) of the first type is arranged between the first network portion (12) and the second network portion (14).
6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 4 or 5, wherein the network node (36) of the first type is selected such that resources utilized by the routed connectivity plane message in the first network portion (12) are minimized.
7. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~one of claims 1 to 6~~ claim 1, wherein the positional information is included in the routing information.
8. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~one of claims 1 to 6~~ claim 1, wherein the positional information is received separately from the routing information.
9. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~one of claims 1 to 8~~ claim 1, further comprising the step of determining, based on the positional information, or receiving transmission information specifying the transmission regime via which the connectivity plane message is to be routed to the determined network node (36) of the first type.
10. (Currently Amended) A method of controlling the routing of a connectivity plane message to a mobile terminal which can be reached via two or more network nodes (26, 36) of a first type and which is attached to a network node (24) of a second type, comprising the steps of:
 - receiving a request for routing information;
 - generating positional information indicating the geographical location of the mobile terminal and routing information associated with the network node (24) of the second type to which the mobile terminal is attached; and
 - transmitting the routing information and the positional information to enable a receiving network component (44) to determine based on the received positional information the network node (36) of the first type via which the connectivity plane message is to be routed.

11-12. (Cancelled)

13. (Currently Amended) A network component (44) for routing a connectivity plane message to a mobile terminal which can be reached via two or more network nodes (26, 36) of a first type, comprising:

- a first interface for receiving positional information indicating the geographical location of the mobile terminal and routing information, the routing information being associated with a network node (24) of a second type to which the mobile terminal is attached;
- a determination component for determining based on the positional information the network node (36) of the first type via which the connectivity plane message is to be routed to the mobile terminal; and
- a second interface for routing the connectivity plane message to the mobile terminal via the determined network node (36) of the first type.

14. (Original) The switching node of claim 13, further comprising a component for extracting the positional information from the routing information.

15. (Currently Amended) A network component (24) for controlling the routing of a connectivity plane message to a mobile terminal which can be reached via two or more network nodes (26, 36) and which is attached to the network component (24), comprising:

- a first interface for receiving a request for routing information;
- a processing component for generating positional information indicating the geographical location of the mobile terminal and routing information associated with the network component (24) to which the mobile terminal is attached; and
- a second interface for transmitting the routing information and the positional information to enable a receiving network switch (44) to determine the network node (36) via which the connectivity plane message is to be routed to the mobile terminal.

16. (New) The method of Claim 5 wherein said network node of second type comprises a mobile switching center (MSC) node.
17. (New) The method of Claim 5 wherein said network node of first type comprises a media gateway (MGW) node connecting said two network portions.
18. (New) The method of Claim 1 wherein said network node of second type is a switching node with a fixed associated between a particular geographical service area and said network node of second type.
19. (New) The switching node of claim 13 wherein said network node of first type comprises a media gateway (MGW) node.
20. (New) The switching node of Claim 13 wherein said network node of second type comprises a mobile switching center (MSC) node.
21. (New) The switching node of Claim 13 wherein said network node of second type is a switching node with a fixed associated between a particular geographical service area and said network node of second type.